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Mr. Chairman, thank you for allowing me to testify today in favor of SB 37. I appear today on behalf of myself and my colleagues at the University of Kansas Cancer Center. As health care professionals who focus on diagnosing and treating cancer, we see every day the effects of smoking and secondhand smoke. In my own career, I have focused on prevention, screening, early detection, and treatment of lung cancer.

We've just begun a new year, and already looming is the sad truth that approximately 173,000 Americans will be diagnosed with lung cancer this year. About 164,000 will die from lung cancer.

Lung cancer is the number one cancer killer in America and worldwide. It is not just my opinion but a medical fact, published by the Surgeon General of the United States, that there is no risk-free level of secondhand smoke exposure. Secondhand smoke contains over 50 chemicals that can cause cancer. Researchers have determined that separating smokers from non-smokers, proper ventilation, and even air filtration cannot eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke.

Although I am a native Kansan, I lived in Colorado for several years before returning to Kansas last fall. On July 1, 2006, Colorado enacted a statewide indoor smoking ban. Additionally, many cities across the country have gone smoke-free in bars and restaurants, and before all of these smoke-free proposals were enacted, there were certainly concerns. Business owners understandably have concerns about lost revenue from smokers. However, in New York City, restaurants and bars actually saw a 9 percent increase in revenue after becoming smoke-free? That is not unique to New York City, either. The Surgeon General found after examining evidence from peer-reviewed studies, that smoke-free policies and regulations do not have an adverse economic impact on the hospitality industry. A statewide law is the best way to ensure that all nonsmokers are protected and all businesses operate on the same level playing field.

Because I am a physician, I'd like to tell you about the health effects of secondhand smoke. Even a short time spent around secondhand smoke causes adverse health effects. Upon exposure person's blood platelets become stickier and the secondhand smoke begins damaging the lining of blood vessels. Further, it has been proven that secondhand smoke causes low birth weight, lower respiratory difficulties in children, and worse, in infants it can cause Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

A new year is a chance for a fresh start. In Kansas, we have the opportunity, with legislation like SB 37, to reduce that 173,000 number.

Again, thank you for allowing me to testify today. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have for me.